AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior version and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently amended) A method for permitting communications between a first communication node and a second communication node, ~~the first communication node and the second communication node each adapted to communicate in a different variant of a protocol or a different protocol,~~ the method comprising the steps of:

for each ~~communication~~ signaling message between the first communication node and the second communication node:

receiving a signaling message from said first communication node;

querying a first Communications Node Database for information about said first communication node in response to said signaling message;

querying a second Communications Node Database for information about said second communication node in response to said signaling message;

making a decision whether said signaling message needs to be modified; and

modifying said signaling message before it is transmitted to said second node in response to said decision,

wherein the first communication node and second communication node are unable to communicate using either a common protocol or a common protocol variant.

2.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said signaling message is a request to connect, modify, or disconnect communications.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said communications comprise: Voice over IP; video over IP; instant messaging; access to conferencing bridges connecting multiple communication nodes; and access to communications servers for deposit or retrieval of stored communications.

4.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said signaling message comprises a registration request; an authentication request; a connection request, a request to modify a connection, and a request to terminate a connection.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of modifying comprises changing at least one of: a source address; a destination address; a signaling protocol; a signaling method; adding a field; deleting a field; a syntax; a punctuation; a spelling; and said communications signals.

6.   (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said first database and said second database are a single database.

7.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of grouping communication nodes into categories, and wherein each category requires a different protocol remediation; and each category uses different signaling addresses for sending messages to a signaling mediation agent.

8.   (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein said signaling addresses comprise a port number.

9.   (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein said categories are based on a specified set of signaling messages requiring remediation.

10.   (Currently amended) A method for authorizing communications between a first communication node and a second communication node, ~~the first communication node and the second communication node each adapted to communicate in a different variant of a protocol or a different protocol,~~ the method comprising the steps of:

        for each ~~communication~~ signaling message between the first communication node and the second communication node:

        receiving a registration request message from said first communication node;

querying a first database to authenticate an identity of said first communication node;

querying a second database to determine which communication services said first communication node is authorized to use;

querying a third database for signaling addresses of registration nodes for said authorized communication services;

querying a fourth database for additional information about said registration nodes;

making a decision whether said registration request message needs to be modified in response to querying said first database, querying said second database, querying said third database, and querying said fourth database; and

modifying said registration request message before it is transmitted to said registration node in response to said decision; <u>wherein the first communication node and second communication node are unable to communicate using either a common protocol or a common protocol variant.</u>

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said first database, said second database, said third database, and said fourth database are a single database.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said communications comprise: Voice over IP; video over IP; instant messaging; access to conferencing bridges connecting multiple communication nodes; and access to communications servers for deposit or retrieval of stored communications.

13. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said communication services comprise: access to cellular networks; access to a PSTN; access to conferencing services; and access to messaging services.

14-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently amended) A method for permitting communications between a first communication node and a second communication node, ~~the first communication node~~

~~and the second communication node each adapted to communicate in a different variant of~~

~~a protocol or a different protocol,~~ the method comprising:

for each ~~communication~~ <u>signaling</u> message between the first communication node and the second communication node:

receiving a signaling message from said first communication node;

making a decision whether said signaling message needs to be modified in respect to an originating address used by said first communication node to send said signaling messages; and

in response to said decision, modifying said signaling message, transmitting said signaling message to said second node<u>;</u>

<u>wherein the first communication node and second communication node are unable to communicate using either a common protocol or a common protocol variant.</u>

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said originating address comprises an IP address and port number

21. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said communications comprise: Voice over IP; video over IP; instant messaging; access to conferencing bridges connecting multiple communication nodes; and access to communications servers for deposit or retrieval of stored communications.

22. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein said signaling messages comprise registration requests; authentication requests; connection request, requests to modify a connection, requests to terminate a connection.

23. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein modifying comprises changing at least one of: source address; destination address; changing signaling protocol; changing signaling methods; adding fields; deleting fields; modifying syntax; changing punctuation; changing spelling; altering said communications signals such that said first communication node can communicate without errors or failures with said second communication node.

24. (Currently amended) A method for permitting communications between a first communication node and a second communication node, ~~the first communication node and the second communication node each adapted to communicate in a different variant of a protocol or a different protocol,~~ the method comprising <u>the steps of</u>:

for each ~~communication~~ <u>signaling message</u> between the first communication node and the second communication node:

receiving, by an agent, signaling messages from said first communication node;

modifying, by said agent, said messages based on a signaling address said agent uses to receive said signaling messages;

wherein said first communication node is configured to use a destination signaling address for sending messages to a signaling agent; and wherein said destination signaling address is configured on said first node based on a protocol variant used by said first communication node; and

<u>wherein the first communication node and second communication node are unable to communicate using either a common protocol or a common protocol variant.</u>

25. (Currently amended) A method for communicating between a first communication node and a second communication node, ~~the first communication node and the second communication node each adapted to communicate in a different variant of a protocol or a different protocol,~~ the method comprising <u>the steps of</u>:

for each ~~communication~~ <u>signaling message</u> between the first communication node and the second communication node:

receiving, by an agent, signaling messages from said first communication node; <u>and</u>

modifying, by said agent, said messages and transmitting, by said agent, signaling messages to said second communication node<u>,</u>

<u>wherein the first communication node and second communications node are unable to communicate using either a common protocol or common protocol variant.</u>

26. (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein said modifying said messages is based

on a signaling address used to receive messages from said first communication node.

27.   (Original) The method of claim 25 wherein said modifying said messages is based on said signaling address used to transmit messages to said second communication node.